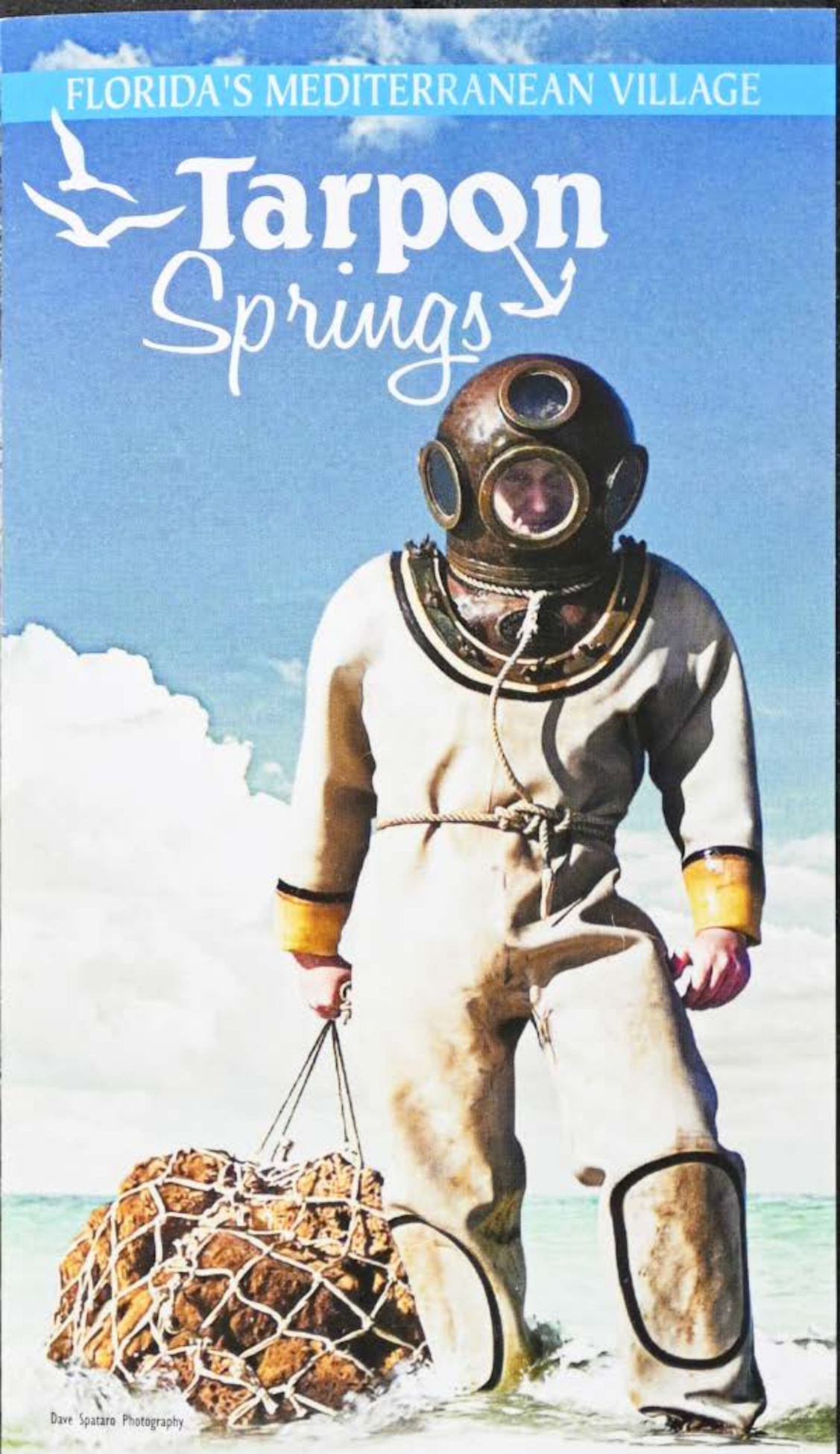
FLORIDA'S MEDITERRANEAN VILLAGE

Tarpon Springs



Dave Spataro Photography

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Dockside Adventures...

Tarpon Springs is the "sponge capital of the world." Its lively sponge dock area, in the heart of the Greek community, is a mix of boats, boutiques and bakeries that runs for several blocks along the waterfront.

Strings of natural sponges sway in the breeze, and the sights, sounds and sensuous aromas of an authentic Greek village fill the air. Some 25 restaurants and bakeries beckon with genuine Mediterranean dishes, such as saganaki – a flaming cheese appetizer – and stuffed rolled grape leaves known as dolmades.

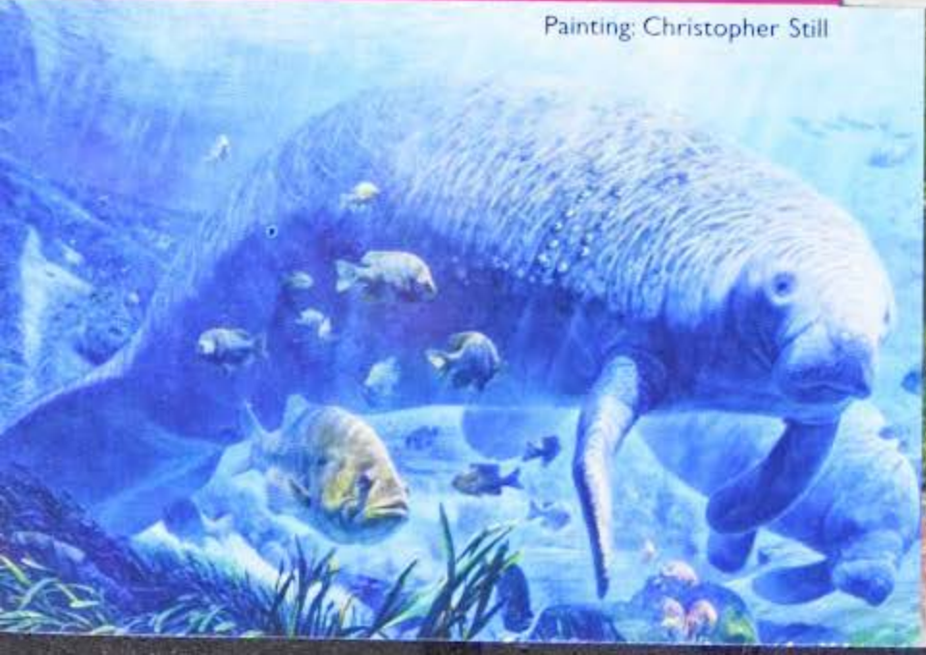
Sponge diving exhibitions, deep-sea fishing and cruise excursions depart regularly. An aquarium and quaint shops line the sponge docks, offering everything from natural sponges harvested by local divers to elegant clothing, swimwear, jewelry and shells.

& Downtown Treasures

Historic Downtown Tarpon Springs reflects the town's Victorian past. Vintage turn-of-the-century buildings now house eclectic boutiques, antique shops, art galleries, studios, cafes, restaurants, craft breweries and a delightful assortment of specialty shops. Nearby is Spring Bayou, a shady, waterfront haven which boasts many homes listed on The National Register of Historic Places. The warm waters of Spring Bayou are also the winter home for a number of endangered manatees, Florida's shy marine mammals.

Downtown's St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral features Byzantine architecture with 60 tons of Greek marble. The Heritage Museum at Craig Park houses a collection of Florida wildlife and marine paintings by renoun local artist Christopher Still. Downtown's Cultural Center, built as the City Hall in 1915, now displays art and historical exhibits and a theater stages live performances and films. The Tarpon Springs Performing Arts Center books a variety of internationally acclaimed musicians and top-name acts year-round.

Painting: Christopher Still



Safford Ave.

Two Cultures,

Tarpon Springs. Its wa
port and shopping district
of a Grecian fishing village.
case of proud historic build
gracious Victorian era. It's
ries, and one you'll find
Pinellas County's oldest city

The town's Victorian inf
1800's to about 1905, when
playground for wealthy No
residents built luxurious es
Soon Tarpon Springs gained
health centers and winter r

Rich sponge beds, di
spawned a flourishing new
sponge divers were recruit
Islands of Greece. The spon
the Greek community, and

Today Tarpon Springs i
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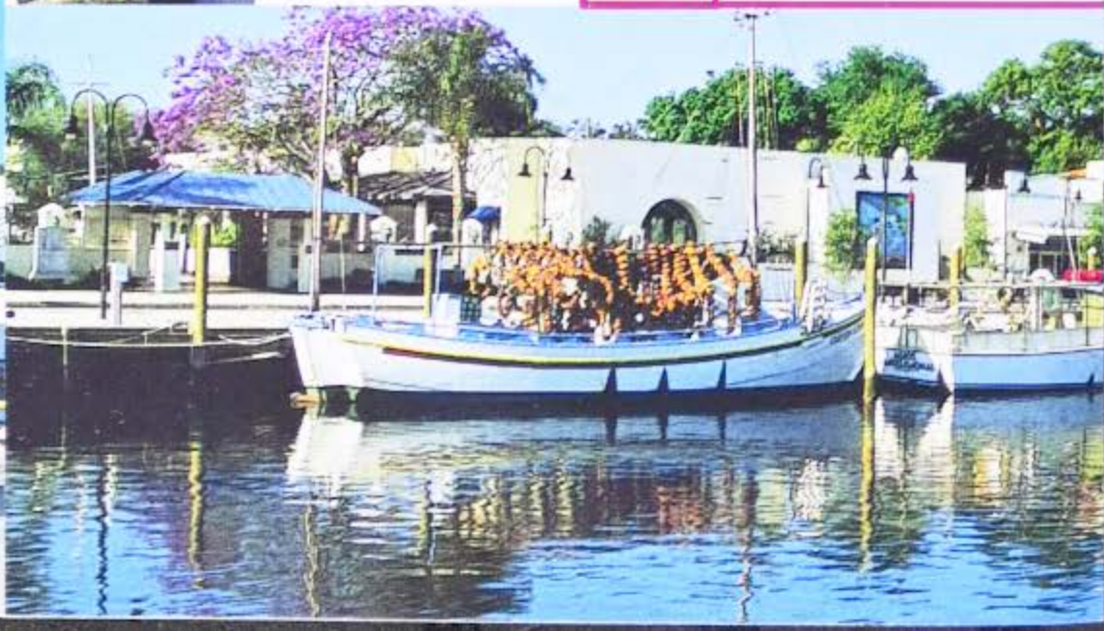

One City

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ith the unmistakable feel
Its downtown is a show-
ngs and homes from the
n unlikely blend of histo-
nly in Tarpon Springs,

uences stem from the late
the seaside village was a
therners. These seasonal
ates along Spring Bayou.
fame as one of the great
sorts of the time.
covered in the 1880's,
industry. In 1905, young
d from the Dodecanese
e industry thrived, as did
e town's focus changed.
a showcase of both cul-
ge Victorian-era man-
o its lively Greek tradi-

Sculpture: Mitch Kolbe

Tarpon Springs is a community full of year-round festivals and fun. Its biggest celebration is the January 6th Epiphany, the most sacred day in the Greek Orthodox calendar. Each year boys of Greek heritage plunge into the cold bayou waters in search of the Epiphany Cross. The event attracts more than 30,000 spectators to a day full of Greek tradition and culture.

Tarpon Springs has two beachfront parks on the Gulf of Mexico, Fred Howard Park and Sunset Beach, and A.L. Anderson Park on the shores of Lake Tarpon. More water-skiing, boating and fishing prospects await along the town's winding, interconnected string of six bayous, a lagoon and a canal that flows through the picturesque town.

The Pinellas Trails runs through Tarpon Springs on the site of old railway tracks, a refuge for walkers, joggers, cyclists and skaters that extends from Tarpon Springs to St. Petersburg.

There is never a shortage of things to do in this beautiful community.

Getting There...

From Clearwater Florida, drive north 12 miles on Alt. 19 or US Hwy 19 to Tarpon Springs.
Visit our website at:
www.VisitGreeceInFlorida.com